

58th Annual ABILITY COUNTS JOURNALISM SCHOLARSHIP

Guide for teachers
of 9th - 12th
grade students



“Americans with Disabilities:

Ready for the
Global Workforce.”



DEADLINE: FEBRUARY 16, 2007

Sponsored by
Alabama Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities
• Alabama Department of Rehabilitation Services • Alabama Career Center System
• Department of Industrial Relations

Ability Counts Journalism Scholarship GUIDELINES

The purpose of this competition is to reward excellence in journalistic writing and to help young Alabamians become aware of the talents that people with disabilities bring to the job market. This year's theme is "Americans with Disabilities: Ready for the Global Workforce."

Preparation _____

Articles must:

- be written in English
- cover some phase of the theme
- be typewritten, double-spaced on 8 1/2-x-11 inch paper
- not exceed three pages in length,
- be accompanied by a separate attached cover sheet

A sample cover sheet is attached. It may be photocopied as necessary. Articles that do not adhere to the above criteria will not be accepted.

Judging _____

This is a community reporting project; therefore, the judges will give considerable weight to each entrant's initiative in obtaining information through personal interviews and observations. Each article also will be judged on content, organization, clarity of expression, neatness, familiarity with disability issues, and use of sensitive language in describing people with disabilities.

Prizes _____

- 1st Place – \$300
- 2nd Place – \$250
- 3rd Place – \$200
- 4th Place – \$150
- 5th Place – \$100

Winners will each also receive a Certificate of Merit from the Alabama Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities. Each teacher of a winning student will receive a Certificate of Meritorious Service.

Deadline _____

The deadline is February 16, 2007.

Mail Entries

Ability Counts Journalism Scholarship Program
Alabama Governor's Committee
2129 E. South Blvd.
P.O. Box 11586
Montgomery, AL 36111-0586

Fax Entries

(334) 613-0937

Email Entries (preferred method**)**

Send entries as a text or Microsoft Word document attachment (include cover sheet information) to:
tholmes@rehab.state.al.us.

Ability Counts Journalism Scholarship

LANGUAGE TIPS*



PUT THE PERSON FIRST.

Say “person with a disability” rather than “disabled person.” Say “people with disabilities” rather than “the disabled.” For specific disabilities, saying “person with Tourette Syndrome” or “person who has cerebral palsy” is usually a safe bet. Still, individuals have their own preferences. If you are not sure what words to use, ask.

Avoid outdated terms like “handicapped” or “crippled.” Be aware that many people with disabilities dislike jargon, euphemistic terms like “physically challenged” and “differently abled.”

Use “hard of hearing” to refer to people who have hearing loss but communicate in spoken language. With any disability, avoid negative, disempowering words like “victim” or “suffered.” Say “person with AIDS,” instead of “AIDS victim” or “one who suffers from AIDS.”

Note: You want to think of people who have a disability as individuals, your friends, your co-workers, your neighbors – rather than using the generic term “they” for people with disabilities.

Say “wheelchair user” rather than “confined to a wheelchair” or “wheelchair bound.” The wheelchair is what enables the person to get around and participate in society; it’s liberating, not confining.

It’s OK to use idiomatic expressions when talking to people with disabilities. For example, saying “It was good to see you” and “See you later” to a person who is blind is completely acceptable. They use these expressions themselves all the time!

Many people who are Deaf communicate with sign language and consider themselves to be members of a cultural and linguistic minority. They refer to themselves as Deaf with a capital “D” and may be offended by the term “hearing impaired.”

*Source: “Disability Etiquette,” a publication of the Eastern Paralyzed Veterans

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Cover Sheet

PLEASE PRINT OR TYPE



STUDENT INFORMATION

Student's name: _____

Grade: _____ Social security number: _____

Home address: _____

City/state/zip code: _____

Telephone number: (_____) _____ Email address: _____

SCHOOL INFORMATION

School's name: _____

Address: _____

City/state/zip code: _____ Telephone number: (_____) _____

Name of principal: _____

Name of teacher: _____

Teacher's signature: _____

Email address: _____

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